

# Gorbachev promises elections; Kremlin authority already dead

MOSCOW (AP) — President Mikhail S. Gorbachev promised new elections and pledged Monday to preserve his national government, but leaders of Soviet republics told him Kremlin central authority already is dead.

"The whole of the center has completely outlived itself. It is dead. It committed suicide," Armenian President Levon Ter-Petrossian told the Supreme Soviet legislature.

A key Gorbachev ally in his efforts to preserve the union — Kazakhstan President Nursultan Nazarbayev — reversed himself and told lawmakers that the republics should have their own armies and foreign policy.

Addressing the legislature for the first time since the bungled hard-line takeover that briefly toppled him, Gorbachev promised new national elections six months after the signing of the Union Treaty — his proposal to hold the country together. But there appeared to be little support for the treaty now.

The Soviet president also told lawmakers he blamed himself for not heeding the signs that the coup was coming, calling it a "lesson of the first order."

In seeking autonomy or outright independence, the republic leaders were taking their cue from

Russian Federation President Boris Yeltsin, who has greatly expanded his authority in the wake of the failed coup.

Nazarbayev proposed that "independence be granted at once" to the Baltics and other republics seeking to secede. Gorbachev, while not endorsing Baltic independence outright in his speech, did not repeat his earlier demands that republics follow a lengthy secession process.

Many Western nations, meanwhile, were establishing diplomatic relations with the Baltic republics of Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia, or moving to do so. Among them was the United States.

In other developments Monday, one week after the coup:

— Lithuania took control of its border posts and began issuing visas, and the president of Uzbekistan told the republic's parliament to prepare a declaration of independence. The Moldavian parliament scheduled a session for Tuesday to decide on a similar question, and Uzbek President Islam Karimov ordered his parliament to draft independence legislation, the Tass news agency reported.

— Nikolai Kruchina, the Communist Party official responsible for administering its enormous

wealth, committed suicide Monday by jumping out the window of his seventh-floor apartment, the KGB said. His was the third reported suicide since the coup failed.

— The Izvestia newspaper and the Tass news agency moved to drop their role as official organs of the Soviet government and become independent.

In his address to lawmakers, Gorbachev spoke of the profound changes that have swept the country since his brief ouster.

"They say that I came back to a different country. I agree with that. To that I can add that to this different country, a person has come who sincerely looks at everything — at the past, at today and the possibilities — with different eyes," Gorbachev said.

He proposed strong civilian control of the military and the KGB, pledged to continue his economic reforms and called for new elections.

Lawmakers voted to convene an extraordinary session of the legislature's parent body, the 2,250-member Congress of People's Deputies, next Monday.

Minutes before the legislature opened, its speaker, Anatoly Lukyanov, said he had resigned in the face of accusations that he was the chief ideologist of the coup.

## U.S. nears recognition of breakaway Baltics

KENNEBUNKPORT, Maine (AP) — President Bush, responding cautiously to the unraveling of the Soviet Union, said Monday the United States is close — but not yet ready — to joining other nations in extending diplomatic recognition to the breakaway Baltic states.

"I'd just like to see a little bit more — a few more cards on the table before we take another step," Bush said, adding that the United States has a special responsibility as a superpower to act prudently.

While proclaiming "the death knell for the communist movement around the world," the president also said the United States would not rush in with money for the Soviet Union.

And Bush made clear that he was willing to conduct business with whomever emerges with the most power in the Soviet Union — Boris Yeltsin or Mikhail Gorbachev. "We'll deal with who's there," Bush said. "It's not for the United States to say whom we're dealing with."

Faced with fast-moving, extraordinary changes in the Soviet Union, Bush made clear that the United States will move tentatively, and avoid bold moves on the diplomatic, economic and political front.

"I don't want to be part of making a mistake that might contribute to some kind of anarchy in the Soviet Union," said Bush, joining Canada's Brian Mulroney at the conclusion of the prime minister's overnight visit here.

Bush summoned senior aides to a meeting at his oceanside vacation home on Tuesday to assess the changes in the Soviet Union. The group will include Ambassador Robert Strauss, who just returned from Moscow, Defense Secretary Dick Cheney, Acting Secretary of State Lawrence Eagleburger, national security adviser Brent Scowcroft, his deputy, Robert Gates, and chief of staff John Sununu.

Bush announced the United States was speeding up \$315 million in agricultural credits for the Soviet Union to buy American grain. The money is part of \$500 million in credits that were to become available Oct. 1 in the second of three installments of \$1.5 billion of U.S. aid. White House press secretary Marlin Fitzwater said the Soviets could have the full \$500 million now if they want it.

Standing alongside Bush outside his summer home, Mulroney announced that Canada was joining a growing list of nations to extend full diplomatic recognition to Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia. For his part, Bush said the United States is "moving very, very close" to recognition but will remain on the sidelines for a time.

Administration officials say the United States will quickly extend recognition, once the Soviet Union grants independence to the Baltics. Bush had expected the Soviet parliament to take that step on Monday.

Bush said he and Mulroney discussed the issue of Western economic assistance to the Soviet Union but said he foresaw no major new U.S. offers.

Deputy finance ministers of the seven largest industrialized nations will gather in London on Thursday to assess how to help the Soviet Union.

## South Africans condemn plan for new constitution

JOHANNESBURG, South Africa (AP) — Conservative whites and anti-apartheid blacks on Monday attacked a blueprint for a new constitution proposed by the governing National Party.

President F.W. de Klerk's National Party has not formally released the plan. But the guidelines, leaked to a local newspaper, call for full black voting rights and replacement of the presidency with an executive council of three to

five members.

Andries Treurnicht, leader of the pro-apartheid Conservative Party, called that "totally unacceptable." The plan "paves the way for black majority rule," his Conservatives complained in a statement.

The African National Congress, or ANC, opposed the blueprint on the ground that crucial clauses could be used to preserve white privilege.

## Inmates continue talks with officials

TALLADEGA, Ala. (AP) — Rebellious Cuban inmates holding 10 hostages for a sixth day at a federal prison continued talking with officials and received medicine from the outside Monday, the warden said.

It appeared that seven men and three women held hostage were unhurt, said Roger F. Scott, warden at the Talladega Federal Correctional Institution.

Scott and other federal prison officials wouldn't comment about any progress or specifics in negotiations with the Cuban inmates who took over a maximum-security unit Wednesday. There were 121 Cubans and 18 non-Cuban inmates in the unit.

Scott said Monday there had been "additional dialogue ... as well as some contacts between medical staff and the Cuban inmates." He described the medical treatment as routine.

It was at least the third time that medical personnel delivered medication through a grille to the detainees and got a look at some of the hostages.

Dan Dunne, a federal Bureau of Prisons spokesman, said the medical workers saw six of the hostages. The Cuban inmates have told prison officials the four other hostages haven't been harmed.

"From what we are being told, they appear to be well, considering the situation, and are in fact able to be walking in the unit," Dunne said.

Dunne said no food had been sent to the unit since the uprising began.

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